



Wind-Triggered Lantern

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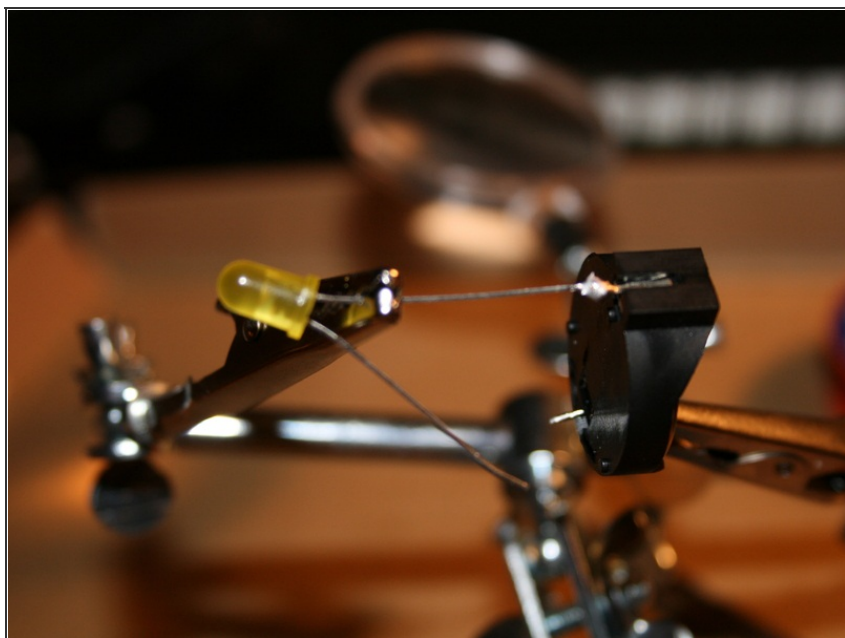
PARTS:

- [LED \(1\)](#)
- [Battery \(1\)](#)
- [Something springy made of metal \(1\)](#)
- [Feather \(1\)](#)
- [Thread \(1\)](#)
- [Soldering iron \(1\)](#)
- [Knife \(1\)](#)
- [Wire \(1\)](#)
- [Battery holder \(1\)](#)
[but recommended](#)
- [Jar \(1\)](#)
[for weather protection](#)

SUMMARY

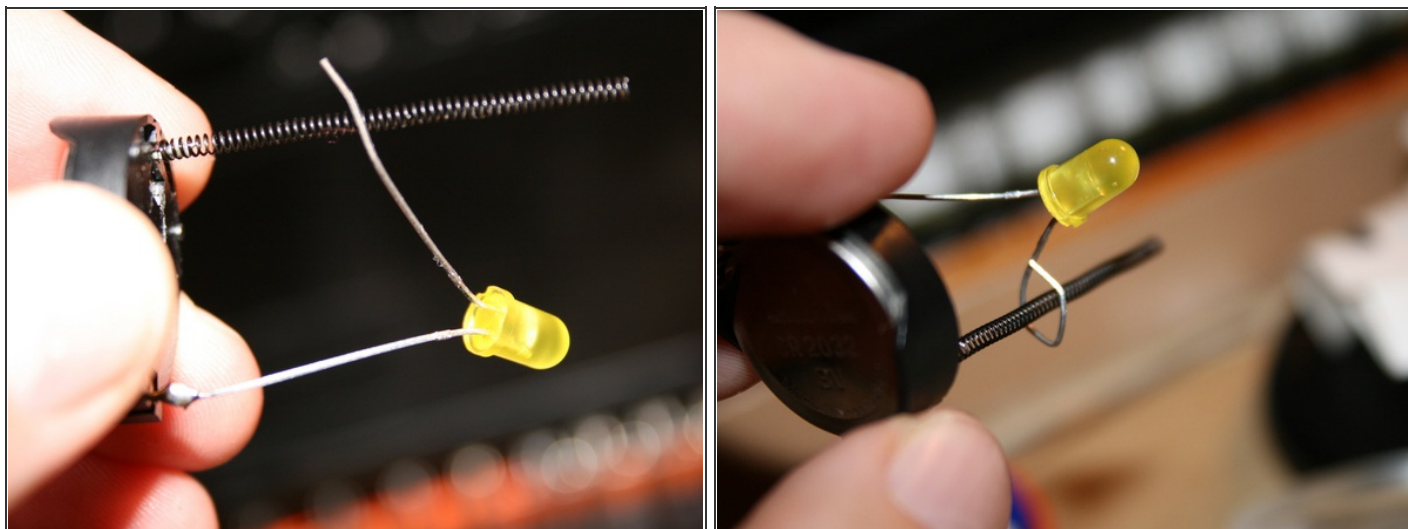
Create a little magic in your yard with this flickering garden lantern triggered by the wind, made with spare parts you probably have lying around your house.

Step 1 — Attach the LED to the battery.



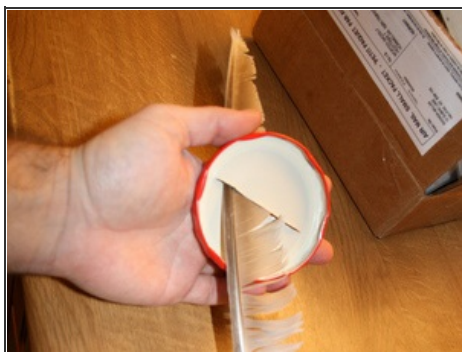
- Solder one of the LED's leads to the battery holder. I got the battery holder for the flat 3V button cell battery from an old PC that I've been scavenging parts from. (It's the battery that powers the internal clock, and I guess every PC has one.)
- You don't need a battery holder at all — you could just tape one of the LED's feet to the battery — but a battery holder makes things easier.
- Remember to test the LED first, so you know you're attaching the correct lead to the correct side of the battery. 

Step 2 — Make the flickering mechanism.



- Solder a flexible piece of metal to the other side of the battery holder. I happened to have a long, thin spring from the CD-ROM drive of an IBM ThinkPad I took apart a while back; it works great. Another option could be a copper thread or wire, as thin as possible, or a piece of guitar string.
- Then bend the unsoldered lead of the LED so it curves around the spring without touching it.
- Attach a feather to the spring with a piece of thread. When the feather moves in the wind, it pulls on the spring, which touches the foot of the LED and closes the circuit — which equals blinking!

Step 3 — Hang it in the garden.



- For weatherproofing, cut a slit in the lid of a jar and put the feather through it. Fiddle with it until the mechanism moves freely.
- Use 1yd or so of strong wire to wrap around the jar, to make a “harness” and a handle. Then go out and hang it in the garden (or run around with it, giggling, like I did).
- **Possible improvements:** Add a solar cell and battery. Create a prettier casing, perhaps using beeswax? Or maybe even add sound!

This project first appeared in [MAKE Volume 17](#), page 92.

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